

Docket No. AUS920010953US1

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

# APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR MONITORING INSTANT MESSAGING ACCOUNTS

5

An apparatus and method for monitoring instant messaging user accounts are provided. The apparatus and method provide a mechanism by which transcripts of instant messages may be generated and analyzed to determine if inappropriate contact with unapproved users is occurring. A user is registered with an instant messaging service provider such that an indication as to whether or not transcripts of the user's instant messages should be stored. In addition, a listing of destination user identifications that are approved, and thus do not require transcripts, may be provided to the instant messaging service provider. Thereafter, when an instant message is received, a look-up of the source user identification of the instant message, and optionally, the destination user identification, may be used to determine if transcripts are to be stored. The transcript may be reported to an authorized recipient of the transcript. An analysis tool is provided for analyzing the content of the instant messaging transcripts to provide additional information regarding contacts in the transcript. Also, a mechanism for maintaining the integrity of the transcripts is also provided such that tampering will be identified and the instant messaging user account may be suspended.